

Elders — Part 1

Elders are blameless. They reserve their judgment. They do not have a passionate temper. They know how to command their family and command obedience. They are the teachers, leaders, and shepherds of the Edah. So you look for a teaching gift. One which ministers the Spirit, not just knowledge. They are prudent, hospitable, faithful, and have model children. They rule well with preaching and teaching. They are worthy of double honor. (With this view of them it is easy to hold them in high esteem and it makes it hard to entertain an accusation about them.) Those who labor hard among us (1 Tim 5:19). Don't entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is evidenced by two or three others who agree. Then they must be brought before the whole Edah. Their conduct should be predictable. They're approved. They are not found going against their conscience. They are beyond reproach, trusted, approved, *they represent you*. They are the first to entertain an angel, always showing love for people, strangers, brothers and sisters. (They are our examples in this. Everyone in the world no matter who they are is lonely. If we lavish love and hospitality on them, they will never forget it. We must spur each other on to do this.) Elders are free from indulgence. They work and work and work. They have unquestioned integrity, trusted by all, not rash, not volatile. They are like our heavenly Father who does not anger easily.

Who do we think elders should be? His tone, his look, gait and dress; his hair not hanging down in his face all the time. He feels ashamed when his hair gets too long. His mustache is not in his teeth. He's sensitive. He trims his beard and gets the wild look out of it. (That look of no one caring for you, like a hobo.)

He is orderly. He's an example to the flock. He doesn't have the ugliest shoes you can find with tar all over them. He even has some Sunday-go-to-meeting shoes that he gets out from time to time.

He has a gift of government. He's alert, cognitive, looking for disorder so he can bring peace and order. He has a gift of administration. He knows how to get things done. He doesn't see things as mountains or giants. He says, "I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me."

He is a diligent leader. He's not soft and flabby with a pooched-out stomach. There's no such thing as a flabby elder.

In the Greek concordance 4245 *presbus* means an ambassador. *Presbuterus*. In the Old Testament it was *Zagen* — the elders that sat in the city gates. They judged things. The 70 elders that Moses raised up to help him bear the load. When matters were too difficult for them, they brought them to Moses. They were older persons. You had to be a certain age to be a senator or an elder. They were qualified men. No fool sat in the city gates. Don't just judge by what the eye sees and the ear hears. You have to judge the intent of people's heart. Don't try on your own, we need counsel. He speaks through a senate of men or a judicial body of men. *Whenever two or three are gathered in my name I will be in their midst*. This speaks of being gathered as elders not just any two or three people.

Presbus is an official position in the senate of elderly gathered men for the purpose of making decisions representing the people. The whole church can't always be making all the decisions. They'll never get anything done. You can trust them to make decisions for you because you've chosen them to be there in your place while you're busy doing greater things. Today it is considered status.

Everybody wants to be an elder (a president). But it is the least to our Master that is the greatest. If you're not gifted by the Holy Spirit with grace to teach you wouldn't want to be an elder because you'll be on the spot without grace. If you strive to be an elder, you'll have to strive to maintain being an elder — you'll wind up with ulcers.

Elders are also ambassadors. They're servants. Deacons wear the name servant like women wear the head-covering for man and Messiah. A senator means an old man (with qualifications). The senate is men who deliberate and make laws. Legislature passes it into laws (1 Tim 5).

If a person is one second older than you he is your elder. You never rebuke or speak harshly to him. Age has rank. Parents are betrayed for not teaching their children respect for older people. If a child didn't rise for an older person he was considered almost reprobate. If he didn't change, he was stoned. If it was found to be the

fault of the parents, the whole family was stoned. The law of capital punishment is a good law, no one who disagrees with this law can ever enter the nations.

1 Tim 5:1-2 — We should see older men as fathers, younger men as brothers and older women as mothers. This establishes respect among us. We should have an attitude of obedience. (It is necessary to read scriptures often and not wait for teachings.) Honor your mother and your younger women as sisters in all purity. All older people aren't presbuters.

1 Pet 5:5 — In the world you try not to judge older men until you see if the intent of their heart is bad. Younger men be subject to your elders. Judicial men are set aside to make decisions and teach but are not necessarily presbuters. But its hypocrisy to treat presbuters with respect and not other elderly people. They should enjoy the natural dignity of age. Ex 3:16 — This is the beginning of spiritual elders. Verse 18 — elders — there was a selected certain number of elders. Moses was like an apostle selecting elders. If they didn't receive Moses it would have been like individual attempts to escape. Only through apostles will there be oneness. Jn 17:20 — The oneness between Yahshua and His Father is the degree that we have to be one. That entails every human relationship, every reaction, every response must be perfect. Be perfected in unity. There's no other way for the world to believe that the Father sent the Son. And we enter the kingdom (His rule) no other way. No discordant ones will rule with Him.

Thinking the best of one another is when you lay down your life believing that everyone else had something more important to do than you did when you're back there washing the piles dishes all alone and you lay down what you thought was important because everyone else had more important things than you did. This is exercising self-control and all the other fruits of the Spirit.

No matter how hard you try to swim, build a boat, a bridge ... there must be a miraculous delivery.

Ex 4:29-31; 19:5-7 — The elders were the foremost in their families. This was the right of the first born. There were elders in their own household. 1 Kng 8:1 — Solomon assembled the elders. Its no light thing we're doing gathering the elders of Israel together. This is possibly the tribe of Gad. The first tribe is definitely Judah. France has the unstableness of water (in their government) like Reuben. Verse 3 — they could do nothing without elders.

Moses at our Father's command chose a college of elders who would bear with him the burden of the people (Num 11:16). There were more than 70 but the 70 were chosen from them. They were the senate of senates, they were judges and apostles too. The job of all these was basically the same. YHWH said gather those you know to be the elders. Dt 27:1 — Moses was working with the elders now.

When we're one as He is one with His Father, you can imagine how great this light is going to be. That light will bring Salvation. Salvation can only exist in this light. The undisturbed peace, unity and fellowship. When we get indignant the light gets dim. Oseh Shalom: we have to bring peace to every situation. Everyone who is called a son of God will do this to the ultimate.

Rev 3:21 — That's overcoming as He overcame. We have to be in unity, exactly as He was in unity with the Father, being a disciple, putting your enemies under your feet, putting an end to your flesh, walking in the Spirit.

That's the obedience of the faith (Rom 1:5; 1 Cor 1:10). Even if we have all the right in the world to be indignant, we have to reserve that right and not misrepresent our Father (Ps 106:33). Moses wasn't able to enter the Kingdom.

That's where biting your tongue off comes in (1 Cor 9:25-27). We disqualify ourselves every day. Our perfect soul and spirit has to go into that perfect body. The only way it can be perfected is through the circumstances in the community. We have ample opportunity to hate or love our brothers every day. That's what the community is for. It's up to us if we're keeping our mind on the Spirit. It really shows up if we are.

Moses wanted to go into the promised land with all his heart. He extended such mercy to Israel, such compassion. Yet he spoke rashly with his lips just one time, and he was disqualified.

Yahshua continually had pity on the multitudes because He saw that they were like sheep without a shepherd (Mk 6:34). He continually denied Himself. He held out a light and an example for people to walk in. When we do this it breaks the cycle of sin. When we're indignant it keeps the cycle going. But if one can lay down his life, it causes a way out. If we're having fellowship and communion with Him, we can do it.

There's no disturbance of peace between Yahshua and the Father. There's no agitation whatsoever. They have a perfect relationship, there's no spite. If the light of salvation is to go forth to the ends of the earth, this same peace must be in us. The things that cause us to have hard feelings with each other or react to one another must be worked out and resisted with self control.

Every reaction, every response must be perfect. For instance you go to the laundry room. It's your time to do laundry. Someone has just finished putting their clothes in the machines. There is so much opposition to reacting as Yahshua did. He always brought peace. There's no other way for the world to believe that the Father sent the Son except to see us in this relationship together. We must deal with all of our own attitudes with self-control. We can deal with each other in kindness, loyalty, love, ... Whoever belongs to Messiah has crucified their flesh. Our flesh is the only thing in us that would rise up and snarl at our brother or be impatient or exasperated. In every situation we have opportunity to love or hate our brother.

We can't rule with Messiah if there's any discord in us at all. Our spirit and soul won't be perfected. This is what laying down our life is — when we exercise self-control to believe the best.

Like when you're back in the kitchen in the dishpan, the dishes piled high as the ceiling all around you. The call had gone out to pitch in on the dishes yet there you stand — alone. Self-control in believing the best is believing that everyone else had something more important to do than do the dishes. You lay down your life by laying down what you thought was important. You even believe that what they had to do was more important than what you had to do. This is exercising self-control and all the other fruits of the Spirit.

When we're one as Yahshua is one with the Father, you can't imagine how great the light that will go forth will be. In His light we see light. We have to walk in the Spirit and abide in the Spirit. He needs us to be fit to rule with Him in the next age. This is His highest desire.

Forty years of Moses' life was totally dedicated to going into that promised land. Even the forty years prior he was raised up for this purpose. His whole heart was bent on this. Then just before the time to go in, he spoke rashly with his lips. Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit. Walk in the Spirit.

It's going to cost us everything to go in through the narrow door. Paul and the twelve tribes strove for this hope everyday to enter the first resurrection. We must overcome for our Master and not just for ourselves or we won't have the grace and the power to do it. We already have everything we need to overcome.

When we're not walking by the Spirit enmities, strife, division and factions come. Walk by the Spirit and you won't carry out the desires of the flesh. You can't drink from two cups. You must drink from one cup or the other. We have to make a deliberate choice to turn to the right and believe. When we turn, the persuasion from the left decreases.

The cross comes to us that He might gain the pre-eminence in every choice in every matter.

Praying to be delivered from evil is not just sin, but an evil that would come upon us like disaster, flood, fire, hurricane, earthquake. And don't invite evil upon yourself like running down the stairs without holding onto the railing.

He had fellowship with them. They could work with one another. Jos 8:10 — The apostles teach the elders, not the rest of the flock. They don't usurp all the gifts.

Mt 16:21 — The guilt upon the Jews is greater than that of the Gentiles because they murdered our Master. His own received Him not (Mt 26:3; 27:41).

The "elders" in "churches" today are not appointed from heaven. They're just in it for themselves. The elders in the first church were chosen to stand before the people to maintain rule over, but not lord it over them. They offer a prescribed guide for conduct and establish the course of a government and enforce it for the sake of the people and in their place.

1 Tim 5:17 — Those elders who don't rule well have to latch on to those who do. There are greater and lesser grace, faith and gifting among elders. The greatest work an elder can do is preaching and teaching. Bringing the word of God to you. It's a hard work so they're worthy of double honor. Don't ever listen to a person with an accusation unless there are two or three witnesses. There will be those who fall. There will always be individuals who have an accusation against an elder. Do not show partiality to elders (1 Tim 5:21).

We are always in the presence of God, His Son and His angels, so maintain these principles without bias. We

must see the great awesome responsibility of appointing elders.

Titus 1:5 — Titus was told to set in order what remained an appoint elders in every city. The next verses are qualifications for elders. Acts 11:30; 12:25; 6:1-7 — They even made mistakes. They were trying to do it all. These deacons were assistants to the apostles — they formed the first presbytery. 1 Pet 5:1 — Peter was a fellow elder with these he was writing to here. 1 Pet 1:1; Acts 15:1,6 — We're circumcised according to the faith of Abraham. Christians cannot distinguish this because it's not given to them to do. When Paul and Ben-Nabiy were in great debate with these men, they were sent to the apostles and elders to work with them. Verse 6 — They came together to look into this matter (Acts 16:4; 15:4; 15:22-23).

Deacons are called side by side with elders. Some deacons serve apostles and some serve elders (Acts 20:17,26-28). Guard for yourselves first by meeting together, guard each other — having to give answer to one another and guard the whole flock.

When you elders start meeting after I leave, guard each other by lifting up holy hands without wrath and dissension. You'll have to go to your wife or your brother or sister if there's anything there that keeps you from lifting up hands. It's the most wonderful guard. Don't be a hypocrite who won't guard each other or the flock. Who makes a person an elder? The Holy Spirit. We must be attuned to Him. Be shepherds of the church. *After my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, in sheep's clothing. They were raised up in their natural abilities. Their purpose is to devour the flock. They may not even know it themselves. From among you men will arise speaking crooked and perverse things to draw men away to themselves.* Though this warning came from Paul, it did happen. They did not heed his warning. Rev 2:1-5 — They carried on in great pretense and fine order. They left their first love. Savage wolves are ones who bring the temperature of the Body down. They are seeking status for themselves. They want to be lifted up, have the rule, be elevated. They carry secret ambition. They don't know who they truly serve. They seek a following for themselves (Acts 21:17-18). James was the leading brother there — the overseer. He was Yahshua's brother. 12:12 — Coordinators.

It may come to the point where you have one deacon to every elder. They get things done — execute things.

There may be deacons traveling with apostles and deaconesses going with them maybe. A paraclete comes to aid — the Holy Spirit is a paraclete. Deacons come to the side of elders. They are able to delegate and get things done

It's feasible to think of one deacon per elder. Elders were appointed to the side of apostles. Elders are servants.

All are servants. The greater you are the greater servant you are. Some may serve only in their own function.

The greater the grace, the greater the service.

There is a bond between elders. There's something haywire outside of standing on the side of authority. If you continue this way it's good you can be found out early so you can be healed. If you have a problem with authority then you have a problem with God (Acts 15:20,28; 1 Tim 5:15,17).

1 Tim 5:15,17 — The name *elder* or *presbuterus* is *Zagen*. Acts 21:18; 2 Jn 1:1 — Elder meaning older brother; aged. Phlm 9 — aged; drawing great respect. We'll have ultimate respect for the aged, not making fun of them the way the world does.

1 Pet 5:1 — Peter was in fellowship as one of the elders, in function with them. He helped them in making decisions in order to raise them up and train them.

Rev 4:5,7,11-14,19 — Elders all the way through. Elders mentioned in heaven *Let the Holy Spirit choose them.*

Deacons: women have the privilege of bearing the covering over their natural covering. It's a matter of the heart. It's got to be over our heart. It's for man that she has power on her head. We can't go unless we're covered. Man can't go unless he's covered by Messiah.

The word *bishop* means a particular gift of overseer. Never call anyone father, preacher, bishop, elder, deacon, ... etc. Use their name — we're all brothers. Anyone who would call himself by the name *bishop* is demon-possessed. We've got to have fellowship where we recognize our gifts among ourselves. Overseers see the whole picture. The Holy Spirit speaks through every member from the greatest to the least. We have to have our ear tuned to the least to hear Him. His life is in every last one of us. We know we've passed out of death into life because we love all the Body. We know because we can

love those who are hard to love. Some people find little cliques to be part of and then find themselves gone because they were never part of the Body.

Overseers are able to see more the overall picture, the physical workings. Hakam is acting as a coordinator. It is foolishness in us not to submit to each other's graces. It results in helter-skelter. *We must rely upon one another.*

Episcopus —presbuterus, elders, episcopus, bishops: overseers. Nahaiel was a bishop — a watcher. We relied upon his oversight. David Saylor is an overseer. He relied upon Neil and others to get the overall picture. Isa 62:6 — Watchmen on your walls. Elders, shepherds, teachers, instructors, correctors, leaders. They could see everything going on in the city because of their fellowship with all those in the Body and put it all together because of their graces. *Shamar*: attend to, guard, protect, hedge about. They shall never be silent. They take no rest and give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. They rely upon the other gifts to help them see better. Shepherds keep watch over your soul. They must have a spiritual gift to see what ordinary people cannot see in your life. They keep watch over you and are always interested in what's going on in you. Heb 13:17 — We need men who will do this. They have a gift of mercy and a gift of healing that can heal you just by talking to them for just a few minutes. They bring you back into fellowship. Back where you were. They're the ones you avoid when you're in darkness.

Phil 1:1 — Fellowship is cultivated through interaction. You can't just assume that it's there. Elders have to have fellowship with the other brethren. What incredible responsibility and light it brings.

Back in Israel there were elders chosen from every tribe and clan to lead the people. They were the men who were much respected. They were the ones yelling at Yahshua and cursing Him. The people couldn't help but go along with them. They carry a strong judgment. That's why all the people turned against Yahshua.

The graces don't function apart from the Body, only in coordination with other graces. There must be fellowship and communion. There is no ability to govern apart from this fellowship. Otherwise there is nothing to stimulate the gift in a leader. Fellowship is the key to everything. We must be abiding at all times. Eph 4 — So everyone can function. Acts 2:44 — Devoted to the apostles' teaching and fellowship.

What our Father gives to one is not to exalt over others, but a way for him to lay down his life. We can see our Father's heart. Gifts are not just for your self, but for serving all.

It's always been our Father's will to have elders in Israel. Sheep need elders to lead them. We can trust them because their responsibility and accountability is so great we can learn to trust our lives to them. Heb 13:17 — They have a special judgment.

His purpose for establishing authority was for the sake of order. His heart wasn't that people would strive against Him, but would love Him with all their heart. The world distorts the meaning of authority, but we can be restored in our understanding.

The elders are in tune with the least little ones. So they can rest upon the greatest grace and be secure and not threatened. They can be led to Messiah.